

JOURNAL

(from 29th April to 25th May, 1872)

WHEN ON A TRIP FROM

SARAWAK TO MERI,

ON THE NORTH-WEST COAST OF BORNEO

IN THE BRUNEI TERRITORY.



APRIL 29th, 1872.—Having had a passage offered me by C—— in his steamer the *Bertha*, a small craft seventy feet long, fifty-five tons burthen, of ten (nominal) horse-power, I gladly availed myself of his kind invitation, especially as he was bound for Meri in the Brunei territory, touching at some of the Sarawak coast stations.

Left Sarawak at 7 A.M., steamed down to Pinding, and breakfasted with M——, the Vice-Consul at Tanah Puteh. We got out of the Sarawak river at the Muaratebas entrance soon after 9 A.M., and cleared Tanjong Poe at noon. I see the hill has been cleared here for the light-house, which is in course of construction.

30th April.—At daylight off Sirik. The neap tides prevented our entering one of the Rejang entrances to visit Bruit, so we stood off along the coast for Oya. Weather very fine, but extremely hot. At 5 P.M. we passed the steamer *Sri Sarawak* from Bintulu bound to Kuching. Entered the Oya river at 6.30 P.M. This river has a bar with nine feet on it at high water. At 8 P.M. we were anchored off the jetty of the Oya Trading Company, where we met W—— awaiting us.

1st May.—The Resident De C—— came over to call on me in the morning, and I walked round with him to see the new buildings which are being erected. I found Oya improved since I last visited it. The new Court House has been built, and I attended De C—— holding Court in the afternoon. W—— and C—— have now got their stores up, and the engines in working order for sago-washing. They speak very hopefully of their prospects if they can only once get fairly started. but their difficulties are great in opening in such a new place as Oya. De C—— dined with us in the evening.

2nd May.—Left Oya at 3 P.M. Weather fearfully hot, with a light breeze. Steered North for Bintulu.

3rd May.—Still steering for Bintulu, making a slow passage, wind and tide against us: the heat intense. Reached Bintulu at 1.30 P.M., and found S—— in the Fort. I walked through the bazaar with S——, which I found had considerably extended, but was not so clean and smart as when I last visited this place. I found my friends GALEAN and Pangêran BUNTAR still alive and well.

The conversation at night turned on Brunei and Borneo politics. Orders have been given to clear Kidurong point for a light-house, and it is hoped a settlement will be formed here, but I question if it will ever come to anything. Where is the trade to come from?

4th May.—We were delayed getting away till 3.30 P.M., C—— having a case in the Malay Court against a man named BILIOH RHO, which cost a great deal of wrangling and disputing.

We left with the ebb tide in a squall of wind and rain, and nearly came to grief on the bar at the mouth of the river, there being only five feet of water. I can see very well C—— is not much of a skipper.

Sailed a N.E. course, enjoyed a fine evening with a strong breeze, which, however, died down at sunset.

5th May.—Passed Soubise mountain and later a high mountain could be perceived in the interior, the name of which I could not learn. The weather very fine, but the heat intense. The coast-line hilly, covered with jungle, with what appears to be limestone cliffs occasionally showing.

We made the mouth of the Meri river at 4 P.M., and not knowing the channel grounded, eventually anchoring in two

fathoms, C—— and myself amused ourselves walking on the sandy coast. We returned on board after dark in a boat from the Meri village bearing a deputation headed by the chief trader Awang BADAR.

After dinner, a long conversation was carried on, which lasted till well into the night, the chief topic being trade. The Awang stated that the Sultan's Officers bearing his chop had already been down the coast giving notice that no oppression would be allowed, and that only the fair and lawful taxes would be allowed to be collected. This is the first-fruit of the treaty between Brunei and Sarawak, and shows that the Sultan's territory is not in such a state of anarchy as is generally supposed. Oyow ABIT, the Kayan Chief who was at Bintulu, was spoken of as a bad character.

The Awang stated that two Chinese had proceeded up the Baram river, leaving two others in their *prahu* at Meri. Everything reported quiet up the Baram. The Awang undertook to look for cinnabar, saying he was sure it was to be found in the interior of the Baram. He seemed afraid of compromising himself with the Sultan, but C—— told him there was nothing to be afraid of.

The Awang finally stated he would proceed to Kuching in the *Bertha*, if we would give him a passage: he seems a perfectly civilised Malay, and told us he had been twenty-seven times to Singapore, but only once to Sarawak, *i. e.*, Kuching.

The Malays who accompanied the Awang told us almost anything might be found in the Baram, and mentioned cinnabar, earth oil, birds' nests, gutta, gold, diamonds, in fact everything that is to be met with in Sarawak. The rice crop in the Baram had failed, and rice is now selling at high prices: there is every chance of a famine breaking out.

We were told that the point we had walked out to in the evening was Tanjong Baili, the rock facing which we found to rise about fifty or sixty feet from the water's edge, and composed of what seemed to me to be sandstone.

6th May.—At 8 A.M. tried to enter the Meri river: we experienced much difficulty in finding the channel, owing to the numerous sand-banks, and we found only $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet of water to get in on. The southern bank of the river slopes back to a low range of hills, the lower portion of which seems admirably suited for gardens. On the

opposite bank an extensive plain extends to the sea, and, I should think, to the northward as far as the Baram river, the mouth of which is visible from the sea-shore here. We anchored off Meri village, which bears a similar appearance to other Malay villages on the coast.

Meri village consists of ten houses, and is under Orang Kaya Setia Raja. I landed on the right bank of the river, accompanied only by my boy, and crossing over the plain to the sea, bathed and spent some time in strolling about, C—— being busy with the steamer. I found the natives quiet and obliging, and I felt just as much at home here as if I had been at Oya. The villagers appear to keep a good many buffaloes, I counted as many as fifty head.

In the evening an old Brunei Chief came on board and said it was all up with the Brunei people, as the Chinese had got into the Baram and were giving the Kayans \$40 per pikul for gutta, while they had been paying a lower price. It is very evident that, if the Chinese obtain a footing in this river and come into direct contact with the Kayans, the Brunei dealers' occupation is gone.

The two Chinese who were in the village paid us a visit. They belonged, they said, to Sarawak, and were awaiting the return of two friends from the Baram who had gone trading in the company of some Brunei men; these Chinese seemed quite contented and satisfied with Meri.

I gathered from the conversation at night that Meri village, where we were, was only the Malay Kampong, the Milanos were to be found only a day's pull up the river. The entire population—Malays and Milanos—in the Meri river was estimated at 1,000 souls.

There was formerly a Milano village below the present one of Meri, the posts of which attracted my attention as we ascended the river. This village was abandoned in times gone by, as the natives were so harassed and ravaged by Dayaks and Kayans, that they had to move their quarters, and they are now scattered over the different rivers in the neighbourhood.

Our Nakodah's son and his nephew had just returned from Brunei, and gave C—— and myself some curious information as to the immorality prevailing in the Brunei capital.

7th May.—Up early and enjoyed a delightful bath in the sea with a walk on the sands.

The Orang Kaya of Gamun—the headman of the village round Baili Point which bears the same name as the bay, namely, Luak—came on board. He spoke of the village as extensive, the anchorage being good for *prahus*, sheltering them from the N.E. monsoon.

The Orang Kaya not being a Brunei man complained of the exactions of Pangêran MOHAMED ALAM, to whom the village had to pay eighty cattles per annum per man.

I learnt to-day that Meri and Sibuti are the property of Pangêran Anak Chuchu (called Pangêran Muda in Brunei) and Pangêran MOHAMED ALAM; the former claims 87, and the latter 107 doors. The population may be estimated at 1,250 souls.

Nyah to Suai inclusive is the property of Pangêran PEMANCHAH; population 500. Suai to Kidurong belongs to the Sultan.

Bliat, on the other side of the Baram, belongs to Pangêran PEMANCHAH; population 1,500. The Bliat river flows so close to that of Baram that boats can be pulled across and cargoes transhipped. Bliat may, therefore, become a better station than Meri.

The Baram population may be estimated at about 30,000, under four or five independent Chiefs. The Malays assure me that this river is safe for trading purposes from its mouth to its source. If this is correct, the Baram is not in such a state of anarchy and confusion as the Sarawak people would lead us to expect.

To-day I had to hear an argument between C—— and the Brunei people as to the relative merits and demerits of the Sarawak and Brunei Governments. Awang BADAN and Tuan PANJANG defended Brunei, and C—— took up the cudgels for Sarawak.

The former said: “Look how the Sarawak people are fined for the slightest offence, which fine goes to the Government, while here, except the *serah*, we rarely fine people, unless it is for some grave offence, and then the fine goes to the injured party.”

In reply to this C—— said: “Your rule is even worse than *serah*, which is bad enough. How about that case where Panglima BALING—the headman of a village—had to pay Pangêran Anak Chuchu 20 pikuls of gums: not having these, he borrowed them from you, Awang BADAN, and he has to pay you sixty pikuls of gutta value about 82,400. You, Awang BADAN, who are a

“ wealthy Brunei man, pay nothing, while Panglima BALING (who does not belong to Brunei) and his people have to pay. You get three pikuls of gutta for one pikul of gums, that is to say, sixty pikuls of gutta for \$1,500, which gutta is worth \$2,400, and this way of dealing you call trading, for this is not an unexceptional case, but of constant occurrence.”

The above-quoted case originated whilst Pangêran Anak Chuchu (whose property the Meri district is) was proceeding from Sarawak to Brunei in his schooner. Meeting with head-winds, he brought up in the Meri river, and, finding this a good opportunity for replenishing his exchequer, levied the above tax. The Pangêran carried away plunder from the unfortunate natives to the extent of \$9,000, leaving the population so deeply in debt that it will take them years to recover themselves.

8th May.—Trading seems slow work in these parts, as C— had great difficulty in getting his friends to come to terms, and it was not till he got up steam and showed that he was in earnest in what he had said that the traders began to make up their minds to commence business.

Having settled his affairs, and got up steam, we commenced working our way downstream, and at about 1 P.M. were out at sea steaming S. W. with a light breeze, but the weather intensely hot.

The Brunei people say that, in former times, their profits, when trading in the Baram river, sometimes reached 400 per cent., but this has been reduced by competition to 100 per cent., and, as the traders borrow their money at Brunei at from 2 to 3 per cent. per mensem, and in trading with the Kayans have to make advances for the produce, which it takes, in many instances, twelve months to come to hand, they cannot be said to be such large gainers by this apparently large profit, considering the risk run.

The Kayans in the Baram appear, from all I can learn, to be very unsophisticated in matters of trade, and their ignorance and simplicity are taken advantage of by a lot of Malays for their own ends, who cheat and swindle these aborigines to their heart's content. The Malays, however, all tell the same story, namely, that it is *easy* to *humbug* the Kayans, but *dangerous* to *bully* them; they barely acknowledge the rule of the Sultan, if they do so at all, which appears very doubtful.

The upper-river Kayans are jealous of their brethren lower down working white birds' nests, and they consider it *infra dig.* to work the inferior quality, which is all they have. The birds' nests may be estimated at about fifty pikuls per annum, which at \$200 per pikul would give \$10,000.

The Orang Kaya of the upper-river Kayans is known by the name of PRANG NIBUT, and can command about 5,000 fighting men.

Tingir is a tributary of the Baram, running to the head of the Bintulu. There are now ten Chinese settled here who have opened a bazaar. These traders are from Bintulu. Having gone overland, they have, by competition and combination, pushed out the Brunei dealers.

A rough estimate of the population between Bintulu and Baram may be taken as follows:—

Meri district,	...	...	1,000
Sibuti ..	...	...	250
Nyah ,,	...	...	350
Suai ,,	...	...	150

say, 2,000 in all.

The Kayan Chief of Tinjir, TIMALONG by name, appears to be more or less enlightened; he flies his own flag, erected on a regular staff, affects looking-glasses, and encourages Chinese settlers. He commands about 1,000 fighting men.

A Kayan Chief, OYOW ABIT, has asked permission to settle in Bintulu, and he has moved and fixed his residence at Seping, at the head of the Bintulu, about eight hours' march from TIMALONG'S house on the Tinjir. Report says that this movement has been brought about in a measure to avoid payment of a debt of \$800 due to a Brunei Chinaman.

The headman at Meri confirmed what we had heard before, that cinnabar is supposed to exist in the interior of the Baram.

We made very slow progress to-day; wind failed us, and we could make no use of our sail; the engines were out of order.

9th May.—Off Balignian in the morning at 6 A.M.; weather very hot. At 3 P.M. we were off Muka, and off the mouth of the Oya river about sunset, just too late to cross the bar; we, therefore, lay off all night.

10th May.—Got up steam at daylight and crossed the bar, reaching the Oya Trading Company's Wharf about 8 A.M. Made my arrangements for proceeding to Muka on Sunday. In the evening Pangêran ABU BAKAR came to call, and we had some talk about Meri and Brunei.

11th May.—W—— off early this morning in the *Bertha* up river to collect sago. I remained quiet all day, preparing to start to-morrow for Muka.

12th May.—Left Oya this morning at 10 A.M. for Muka, walking along the sea-shore. I had good walking, the sands being dry and firm, but the heat and glare were very great.

I had several small streams to cross, and, being unable to swim, and there being no bridges, I had to float over one stream after another by means of *batangs* or trunks of trees.

The first stream thus crossed was Benutus. There were no inhabitants here; then came Bulu also uninhabited; the Penat with a small village of about 100 souls; then Judan with 400 or 500; Petian uninhabited; and Petanak with 500 or 600. These villages are all up-stream, and there are no habitations near the sea where I crossed.

My legs and face were very much scorched, and I was very glad to reach Muka, which I did at about 3 P.M., after having been thoroughly wetted to the skin by a thunder-storm. I called on H—— of the Borneo Company, where I met F—— from Tigora, who was here on business; from thence I went on to the fort, where I found De C—— and R——. The former is now the Resident *vice* R——, who is promoted to Sarawak. R—— is only here now for the purpose of "coaching" De C—— in his new duties.

14th May.—Walked over to the Borneo Company's works and saw N——. The company talk about extending their operations, and an engine will soon be at work here.

I went up the Tilian river to-day with R——. Sago is actively worked in this small stream; houses, on both sides, full of sago. Men, women and children find ample employment. At the same time the stench was almost overpowering.

Some Sea-Dayaks from up-river to see R——. They have a grievance, or a *bichara*, which will be looked into to-morrow.

De C—— told me to-day that a young male *mias*, shot by him on the Padas river, in the North of Borneo, measured eight feet ten inches across the span, height four feet seven inches, and across the face thirteen inches. *

15th May.—The Sea-Dayak complaint was gone into to-day by R——. It resolved itself into a request on the part of these “spoiled children of nature” that they might obtain a head.

It seems that one of their relatives had died, and, therefore, they wanted a head. Some one had told them that a head belonging to one of the Lanun pirates killed off Bintulu was available there, and they wanted permission from the Resident to go and find it. R—— talked them over and sent them all home again. Had he granted the permission they asked, the whole story might have been a myth, and instead of proceeding to Bintulu to look for an old smoke-dried skull, they might very quietly have picked up a fresh head without the owner’s knowledge or consent—a little game these people are fond of playing among themselves.

16th May.—Made arrangements to leave for Oya to-day. R—— tells me that there are some nine Milano *kampongs* up the Muka river, and three up the Tilian, all working sago. Their united populations may amount to about 5,000 or 6,000, while at Oya there may be nine or ten *kampongs* with a population of 5,000 or 6,000.

At the head-waters of the Muka and Oya rivers some Sea-Dayaks have settled. On the Oya river are three Chiefs with a following of perhaps 100 fighting men; on the Muka there are four Chiefs with perhaps the same following. These Dayaks have come in from the Rejang and Kanowit rivers, there being a great tendency on the part of the people of these rivers to settle in Muka and Oya.

R——, in answer to some questions of mine, such as, whether women are allowed by the Milanos to take part in religious ceremonies, whether they sell their children, and whether there is any record of cannibalism having been practised in this part of the country or not within the memory of the present generation, very kindly gave me the following information :—

“The Milanos have no established religion of their own, though there is no doubt that they acknowledge and believe in

* [This is the largest ever heard of if the figures are correct.—ED.]

“ one Supreme Being and give him the same name as the Mahomedans—‘Allah taala.’ They seldom appeal to him, however, in their troubles, and rely rather upon the power of *hantus*, or spirits, whom they propitiate in time of sickness by letting off guns and feasting. It is generally the practice, after a feast of this kind, to place a portion of the viands in the jungle, at a distance from the house where the prayer-meeting has taken place, to lure away the evil-spirit which is troubling the house.

“ Sorcery in this part of the country is chiefly practised by women, and the older and uglier they are the greater is supposed to be their knowledge of the art; men who practise these tricks are called *manangs*.

“ Milanos and Dayaks have the strongest possible affection for their children, it being considered a disgrace for any woman to be childless; so strong is this affection among the Milanos that they will readily part with a child in order to better its condition, and money never passes on such occasions. People will often thus adopt the children of others poorer than themselves, not with any idea of making slaves of them, but showing them the same affection that they would do were they their own.

“ Human sacrifices were common among the Milanos previous to the cession of the country to Sir JAMES BROOKE. At Rejang village, a young virgin was buried alive under the main-post of a house, and it was not at all an uncommon practice, when an Orang Kaya died, to sacrifice from 10 to 12 of his slaves and bury them with him, the poor wretches receiving a solemn admonition to tend well upon their master in the new world.

“ That cannibalism was once prevalent in Borneo may be a fact from the traces of it which are still seen existing. Among Dayak and Milano tribes, in many parts of the country, it is the practice still to cut up and consume the raw heart of “ a brave ” killed in battle, under the idea that the partakers will in time become braver.* The way in which they establish a brotherhood between people of different tribes, viz., by puncturing the arms and each imbibing a portion of the blood, points also to the fact of such practices of cannibalism having been anything but uncommon in the country.

* [A similar practice prevails amongst the Chinese in China, the liver being the part usually selected.—ED.]

De C—— tells me that in this district sons are a curse, and daughters a blessing to their parents, both amongst the Malays and Milanos, for this curious reason. that when the sons grow up they look to the parents to help them with the *bri-an*, or wedding portion. and when married they leave their home to live in the house of their father-in-law.

A man and woman with a family of daughters would thus be gainers by a number of young men coming to live in their house and working for them on their sago plantations, and would, at the same time, have the pleasure of seeing the gongs ranged round the posts and walls which the young men have brought as *bri-an* into the family.

De C——, who was amongst the Muruts shooting *mias* in the north of Borneo for some months in 1870. speaks of these people as thorough savages. Some of them are tattooed. They are great head-hunters, and when De C—— was up the Padas river, a sacrifice took place in the neighbourhood, and I cannot do better than use his own words:—

“ One of the Muruts had been murdered by a roving party of head-hunters. *i. e.* killed with blow-pipes. The tribe, determining to avenge his death, seized on an old woman belonging to the hostile tribe, who had been long living in the village, and, binding her on a bamboo grating over the grave, proceeded to despatch her with knives, spears and daggers.

“ The brother of the murdered man struck the first blow, then all joined in till life was extinct; the blood was allowed to flow into the grave over the corpse; the skull was cut into fragments, and with the corresponding portions of the scalp, the hair attached, was divided amongst the friends and relatives: the nails were also extracted.

“ The Orang Kaya then proceeded to ornament a pole in the native fashion, with strips of plantain bark, the summit of which he surmounted with his portion of the skull: on either side of the centre pole, another pole was erected, on each of which the five nails of a hand were exposed. The body of the woman was buried with that of the murdered man.

“ The Muruts have a curious prejudice against pork that has not been raised under their own houses; the people of one village will not eat of a pig which has been reared in a neighbouring

“village. This prejudice extends even to European bacon in tins, which they refuse to touch, although jungle pigs are eaten readily.

“The sago plantations in the Muka district are strictly considered personal property of individuals, as a general rule, and questions as to proprietorship form the principal cases in our Courts. The plantations are either acquired by hereditary succession, or by purchase. Occasionally a plantation will be found which is held in common by the members of one family, but generally this occurs when the parents have not long died, and the children consist principally of girls. In the north, amongst the Dusuns, where sago is unknown and padi plentiful, I have visited some villages where the padi is common to all. These are inland villages. Those near the sea have not this custom.

“As for the presence of women at religious ceremonies, here at the swinging ceremonies they are always present, and also when feasts are held in honour of the padi spirits. So far as I had power of observing, women do not become spectators of human sacrifices, even though the victim be a woman. The Muruts never sacrifice one of their own people, but either capture an individual of a hostile tribe, or send to a friendly tribe to purchase a slave for the purpose. The Dusuns do not sacrifice human beings, even when they build their houses.

“In this country, when an aged Milano is sick unto death, and no hope remains of his recovery, it is the custom for the nearest relative to present the dying person with a shroud, generally a gold-cloth. Among the northern tribes it is the custom, at this crisis, for friends of the dying person to present the nearest relation—husband, wife, or child—with small tokens of affection, such as a piece of black cloth, tobacco, &c. The corpse is invariably kept in the house until it is far advanced in decomposition—from ten days to a fortnight—and then, if it can be squeezed into a jar, this is done at once, if not, the corpse is put up a tree or covered with stones, until it is reduced in dimensions.

“Among the Muruts the women till the soil and reap the padi, roam the forest in search of edible leaves and fungi, while the men hunt, fish and make war, and when not employed in any of

“ these occupations, remain idle, as they never help the women
“ in the fields.

“ The Dusuns, on the contrary, till and hunt also, the women
“ carrying wood and water and attending principally to household
“ duties, seldom going afield except when all hands are wanted.

“ The Muruts will fell forest trees in order to clear land, but
“ will not clear secondary jungle. Certain fruit trees are considered
“ the common property of the village, and others are private pro-
“ perty; unless the *tabu* mark is placed on any particular tree
“ (a few dead leaves bound round the tree), it is generally
“ considered that passers-by may help themselves to the fruit.

“ I have never met with cannibals in Borneo, although I am sure,
“ from all I have heard, that the practice of eating human beings
“ has not long died out, and I think it very likely it may still exist
“ in obscure and little known places in the far interior.

“ With regard to slavery, the Muruts have slaves and will sell
“ their children to pay their debts. They follow a fixed custom
“ in not selling a slave to another person, unless with the slave's
“ consent.

“ Dusuns will not have slaves, nor will they sell their children,
“ nor will they give up runaway slaves.”

I left Muka to-day in a *prahu* with F—— of the Borneo Com-
pany. We had both wind and tide against us, and reached Oya
only at 7 P.M.

18th *May*.—I find Oya very much improved since my first visit
last year. The cultivation of sago is rapidly extending. During the
last twelve months the Government has erected a Court-house and
Officers' quarters, a bazaar has sprung up, a road has been con-
structed connecting the Oya Trading Company's sago manufac-
tory with the village, and on to the sea-shore. The Oya Com-
pany's works are all new, and besides the manufactory itself with
its various sheds, there is a substantial dwelling house for the
partners.

19th *May*.—Went over the sago mill with W——, who gave me
some particulars about the works and the manner in which they
prepare the sago.

The engine is one of 14 horse-power, and, when the mill is not in
use in grinding and washing sago, can be used for driving sawing-
machinery.

Both raw sago and sago trees are purchased and worked up; when the former is bought it is simply washed and prepared for the market, the grain having been previously stamped out of the tree trunks by the feet of the natives; when, however, the trunks of sago trees are purchased, the process is a longer one.

The trunks of the sago trees are some thirty to forty feet in length and are sold by the cut or *krat* of three feet, the average price being thirty cents per cut. One cut may be said to contain a little more than half *pasu* of sago, though some cuts may run higher, even as high as a *pasu*, but this is rare.

These *krats* in coming to the mill are denuded of the outer bark and then split with a wooden wedge; the sago tree being nothing but a cylinder of pith, splits with great ease.

The *krats* are then placed before a revolving cylinder studded with steel points, driven with great velocity and liberally supplied with water; this cylinder tears or pulverizes the *krats* into a pulpy consistency with extraordinary rapidity.

Placed immediately under the cylinder is a circular vat in the centre of which stands a vertical shaft with revolving wings, which agitates the sago pulp with great velocity and drives it into a horizontal cylinder of fine wire. The interior of this gauze cylinder* is provided with means to propel the fibrous matter forward while the pulp is forced through the gauze into a vat or tank beneath; in this the sago flour sinks to the bottom while the refuse is discharged at the other end of the open cylinder on a tray covered with wire-gauze.

The sago on being removed from the tank is placed in vats supplied with clean water in which are revolving agitators. When it has been thoroughly stirred up by this process, it is drawn off through taps and allowed to fall on a tray of fine wire-gauze, underneath which are long wooden gutters to receive the sago water, while the refuse is thrown off the tray in another direction.

* This gauze cylinder works in about five inches of water, and is internally arranged with wings or paddles on the Archimedean principle of screw.

The cylinder at the admission end is six feet in diameter while the discharge end is but four feet; hence this enables two-thirds of the cylinder to revolve in a few inches of water, while the tray at the discharge end is just above the water level placed there to receive any sago-flour that may escape from the cylinder, of which, however, there are no traces.

From these gutters the sago is dug out and placed in the sun to dry when it is ready for market.

I find there are a dozen Chinese settled in Oya and perhaps half a dozen engaged in trade up the river.

21st May.—As I wished to get to Sibü as quickly as possible and having very little kit or impedimenta, I engaged only a small boat with a crew of five men, our only arms being a snider rifle and our swords.

I left Oya at about 11 A.M. after some trouble with my crew. When off the Mudan, found the stream dry: so I had to stand off with a fair wind, but in a heavy squall of rain, for the mouth of the Igan, which I reached at 6 P.M.

The shore between Oya and Igan differs entirely from that between Oya and Bintulu, the casuarina trees entirely disappear and are replaced by jungle down to the very water's edge, and a muddy foreshore replaces the fine sands which exist further north.

The Igan village is a dirty collection of Malay huts and hovels, and it being dead low water I had the full benefit of the smell which arises from the accumulation of mud and filth under the buildings.

I left the village about 8 P.M. and proceeded up-stream with the flood tide.

22nd May.—All day engaged in working my way up the Igan stream, one of the most uninteresting rivers it has ever been my lot to explore. The shores, low and muddy, are covered with jungle to the water's edge, so much so that it was very difficult to find a spot where we could land to cook our mid-day meal. Not a bird or beast of any sort to be met with, and not a human habitation till very late in the evening when we approached Sibü Station. I think we passed only one boat the whole day. Weather very hot, but a steady breeze enabled us to make good progress, and I reached Sibü fort at about 7 P.M.

23rd May.—I heard to-day that the *bala* or expedition against the up-river Dayaks under ANDAM, who had built a small stockade on the Mujok, had been quite successful, and had only just returned; one man of the enemy was killed, and a good many wounded, our *bala* losing two men killed, but no heads, and a few wounded. The expedition went on to Intiman, and found the Dayaks moving to Entabai. Meeting with no resistance, our Chiefs ordered all the

houses to be destroyed, and the Dayaks were ordered to move to Entabai. ANDAM ran away, but is expected shortly to return to Entabai and sue for peace. FITZC——, in charge of Sibü fort, tells me that the Rejang is now free of enemies, and perfect peace may be said to prevail. I wonder how long it will last. Our *bala* was a Kalukka and Rejang one.

I walked over the island of Sibü and through the bazaar and *kampongs*, finding everything much improved, and was told that trade had very considerably increased. It must, however, be terribly monotonous living on this island.

25th May.—The gun-boat *Heartsease* steamed up-river to-day bringing powder, which had run short in the fort.

I took a passage in her for Kuching, arriving there on the 26th May.

N. DENISON.

